885 177 554 over the country from Maputju to the borders of Gaza, but only during the last hundred years. This black crown is called *ngiyana* (Ro.) or *shidlodlo* (Dj.), and the crowning ceremony is called *khehla*. From this verb has come the term *makhehla*, a name given to all those who wear this ornament.

885 301 527 This ceremony is accomplished in the following way. At a given time, the chief informs all the men of a certain age that they must prepare their rings. The counsellors and the sons of the royal family who belong to this " class " must go to the capital. Several oxen are killed ; the back tendons are carefully preserved and made into strings. This being done, the master hairdressers, that is to say those who know how to fix these strange appendages, are called in.

They come, supplied with small sticks (tinhlamalala, the central nervures of the leaves of the milala palm-tree) which they plait together with these strings made of tendons so as to form the skeleton, the circular frame of the crown. These strings are drawn through the curly hair, all round the head, so as to fix the frame of the crown above the temples. The remaining hair on the sides and behind has been previously shaven. The chief possesses a provision of wax ; the wax which is preferred is not that of bees, but the rosy secretion of certain grubs which is found on some bushes, and which the young boys of the capital go and collect. This wax is mixed with different ingredients to make it black. It is fixed on the frame of sticks and shaped into a large round or oval ring, as black as jet, which can be made to shine brightly. When all is finished, they eat the flesh of the oxen, enjoy themselves, dance and celebrate this great occasion!

885 301 The more humble subjects crown themselves in their own villages, where tonsorial artists come to adorn them. The poor go to the hairdresser, and do not use strings made of tendons (they have no ox to kill), but strings made of the fibres of a palm-tree, which are cheaper. It is said that nowadays palm-tree strings (bukuha) have almost entirely supplanted the others, the more so as they are not spoilt by the washing of the crown ; whilst, if the *ngiyana* is fixed with tendons, no water must fall on it, or it would soften.

Moreover the crown must be taken care of ; it can be spoilt

643 619 seems to have been particularly feared. He had even bought poison from white people and is said to have killed his rival, Musongi, chief of the Maputju clan, with whom he fought the battle of Malangotiba in 1870. He sent a woman of bad life to Maputju. The woman succeeded in winning the confidence of the king and poured this poison into his glass. Nowadays the Ronga chiefs have been taught by the Authorities to sit in council when discussing matters.

643 The two principal prerogatives of the chief are the right of *luma* and taxation.

III. *The right of luma, and the first fruits rites.*

181 241 We come to a set of rites which might be dealt with when considering the Agricultural life, but I prefer to describe them here, as they provide us with a typical illustration of the constitution of the clan ; they are highly characteristic of the Bantu community, a community which is essentially agricultural in its pursuits, animistic in its beliefs, and hierarchic as regards its social and national life.

643 262 784 527 241 We have already met with the word *luma* and noticed that its ordinary meaning is *to bite* ; its ritual sense is to *remove the injurious character of a given food by a certain ceremony*. The luma is a necessity before eating the flesh of certain wild beasts, as we shall see when studying the laws of hunting (See Part IV). But it is of still more importance, and one of the great laws of the clan, that the official luma shall take place before the subjects eat the products of the new year. There seem to be two ideas at the root of this strange taboo :

1) To eat certain kinds of food is dangerous for one's health, and the first mouthful taken must be seasoned with the royal drug.

2) The gods, the chief, and elder brothers, have a prior right to enjoy the products of the soil. To precede them in doing this is a sin which would bring them misfortune. The hierarchy must be absolutely respected.

821 which is also met with in *nyeleti* (star) and in the names of certain rivers. (I. p. 36.) At the present time there is no trace of worship or of mythological conceptions in connection with it. Natives see in its spots a woman carrying a shirundju basket or a bundle of sticks, but they do not attach to that image more importance than we do when we talk of the man in the moon.

821 I have described (I. p. 52) how the new moon is received
527 with exclamations of joy : in the villages the first person who
241 sees it shouts : "Kengelekezeeee,"—"the Crescent! the Crescent!" and this word is passed on from one village to another, and dancers rejoice because they will have moonlight to illuminate their feasts! Such is, at least, the reason now given by the Rongas for this custom. There were perhaps other ideas connected with the new moon in former times. — According to a Nkuna informant the day of the new moon is a *shimusi*, a day of rest. It is taboo to till the fields and cut the roots of the trees with a hoe. The moon must be left to become firm (tiyela). It is still tender as a new born child. Destroying winds might
821 blow and hail fall if this taboo were transgressed. — The
787 appearance of the crescent was also carefully examined, says the
828 same informant. If its horns were turned towards the earth, this showed that there was nothing to fear, all the dangers contained in this month had been poured out : "mafumo ma hangalakile" — "the assagais were dispersed." On the contrary, if the horns were turned towards heaven, this showed that the moon was full of weapons and misfortunes. — The new moon is of great importance in the customs connected with exorcism and possession, as every exorcist must undergo the *haza* purification at each new moon (Chapter III). Moreover Thongas, like many civilised people, also believe that some persons at this time have an attack of madness which is called *rihuhe ra ñhweti*, the lunar madness.

772 When the first quarter appears, the moon is said to *thwaza*,
821 a Zulu word which corresponds to *tjhama* in Thonga, and is very much used in the terminology of possession. Eight days later, it is said to *basa*, to be white or brilliant ; full moon is said to *sima* or to *lata batjongwana*, to put the little children to bed, because when it rises, it finds them already sleeping on their mats.

643 The law of luma seems to have applied to all kinds of food
262 in former times. Nowadays it is not observed for the following
171 products : maize, Kafir beans and peas, rice, sorghum, water
627 melons (makalabatla) and monkey nuts. It is partly observed
241 for mafureira almonds (tihuhlu), strychnos paste (fuma) and pumpkin leaves (magawane). It is strongly enforced for black Kafir corn and bukanye. Such is at any rate the case in the four clans of Nondwane, Mabota, Ñwamba and Tembe. Amongst the Zulus and Swazis on the contrary, I have been told people luma maize and do not luma kafir corn. Kafir corn is probably the most ancient cereal amongst the Ba-Thonga, and bukanye has always existed in the country. This is perhaps the reason why these luma rites, which bear a very old character, are still applied to these products to the exclusion of other more modern cereals.

1. *The luma without a religious ceremony.*

631 Let us first study the less ritualistic kind of luma, the luma
262 of the *mafureira almond*, for instance. It is practised in each
643 sub-chief's village, and, though it is tending to become obsolete,
527 it is still enforced by some "tihosana." Thus my neighbour in Rikatla, Habele, the hosana placed by Mobvesha over this part of the territory, met some time ago a boy who was eating these almonds, the description of which I shall give later on.— "Who gave them to you ?" asked Habele... The child kept silent.—"Come with me to your parents!" Having found their home, the sub-chief scolded them severely : "You have started sucking (munya) the almonds before us. You wanted to kill my head ? Pay a fine!" They answered : "The birds made them fall from the tree... The children were not guilty!" However they had to pay 500 reis.

262 The luma of almonds, which takes place in December, when
643 they are ripe, is performed in the following way. The almonds
527 are dipped into a small calabash full of water to soften them. Some of the powder of the nyokwekulu is added to them. The headman first takes some for himself and then distributes them to his people. They suck the almonds, take in their hands the part

262 643 527 which is not eaten, and rub their faces with it. But *no religious ceremony is performed.* It is the same for the *fuma*, a paste made with the contents of the kwakwa fruit, a kind of Strychnos very similar to the nsala, but of a different taste. The ceremony was even more simple than with the almonds ; the chief used to send a little of this paste to each village saying : "Let this be the first bite you swallow : the new year has come!" (Luman, ku tlhese nguba.) No powder was used in connexion with it. The magical drug was used, on the other hand, when the luma of pumpkin leaves took place.

II. *The luma of the Kafir corn.*

262 643 782 769 796 The great, the official luma, amongst the Ronga clans, is that performed for the Kafir corn (mabele). The great wife of the chief grinds the first grains of Kafir corn reaped in the fields. She cooks the flour in a pot and pours into it some of the royal powder kept in the calabash, so as to make a *shimhimbi* (See page 42). The chief takes a little of the food and offers it to the spirits of his ancestors, at the main entrance of the royal kraal. He prays to them in the following terms : "Here has the new year come! Precede us, you gods, and luma, so that, for us also, Kafir corn shall help our body, that we may become fat, not thin, that the witches may increase the corn, make it to be plentiful, so that, even if there is only a small field, big baskets may be filled! (Nguba hi yoleyi! Rangan ñwine, mi luma, ñwi Psikwembu! Na hine, mabele ma tjhama amirin yeru psinene, hi kuluka hi nga wondji. Abaloyi ba yandjisa, psi tala ngopfu, nambi shi shisi-ñwanyana shi shiñwe, a ku tale tingula!)"

262 643 796 554 609 After this religious ceremony everyone luma in turn, the chief first, then the sub-chiefs, then the counsellors, then the warriors who have killed enemies in battle, then the headmen of the kraals who have all been summoned to the capital. Should one of the headmen be prevented from coming by illness, his younger brother will not precede him. He will bring him the *shimhimbi* in a leaf ; the elder will take it, and, after him, the other brothers. Women do not eat the magic powder. Neither do strangers,

751 One frequently meets people wearing this ornament, which also
755 aims at making the cure permanent. Sometimes the nails are those
from one hand and foot only. The *psirungulo* i. e. the astragalus
783 of the slaughtered goat, or the beak, claws and some feathers of the hen (p. 410) are also tied round the neck of the patient. This is the *religious amulet*, whilst the lizard bag is the *medico-magical* one. Convalescents are moreover provided with the *fowa*, a kind of rattle, consisting of a root called *sungi* (there is no connection between this word and the sungi of the circumcision school, I. p. 77) contained in a kind of round box made of palm leaf which is tied round the ankle. This is intended to protect them against the perspiration of those who have sexual relations (p. 358). They sometimes wear a little piece of reed filled with a protective powder, as do also nursing mothers during the whole nursing period (1) (I. p. 48).

● [527] The hondlola rite also marks the moment when sexual relations, which had been suspended during the disease, are resumed. Celebrating as it does the victory over disease, the day of hondlola
756 is regarded as a fête-day. Beer is prepared as a mark of gratitude to the doctor and "to rejoice his heart." It is also the day of reckoning ; the physician must be paid. This individual has not, however, waited until now to ask for a "refresher." From the commencement of the case it has been necessary to *pfula hwama*, that is to say, to lift the cover of the medicine wallet by means of sixpence or a shilling. At times he has been very anxious to change the medicine, in order to produce a greater effect ; on such

751 (1) I may here mention two other articles which are frequently worn by Thonga Natives: one is the dried seed-pod of the flower of the large Protea bush (sugar bush) which is so common on the slopes of the Drakensberg. It looks like a hard brownish cone, all covered with concentric layers of little square ledges. This cures *vertigo*. Why? No doubt because when it is turned round rapidly, it makes the spectator giddy. It is hung round the neck with a string. This curious remedy is brought back from the Barberton mountains by those who go to work in the Transvaal. The second is a bracelet often seen round little children's wrists, and is made from the skin of a kind of tawny mole, called *tju'unyana*, which digs its burrows almost on the level of the ground. You can see the earth a little raised all along its track. The *Filaria* parasite, which is often met with in our tribe, also creeps under the skin in a similar way (p. 343). See illustration No. 5. These are two new instances of the principle "similia similibus curantur." Bags filled with snake powder are also often worn as a preventive.